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October 31, 2016

Via Electronic Filing

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Room TWA325
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Post-Incentive Auction Transition Scheduling Plan, MB Docket No. 16-306; GN
Docket No. 12-268**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

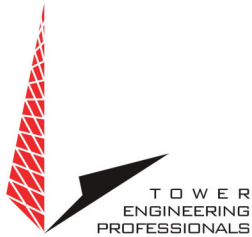
Tower Engineering Professionals, Inc. (TEP) and TEP Design Build (TEPDB) submit these comments to voice support for and offer some constructive criticism of the proposed post-incentive auction transition scheduling plan (the “Transition Plan”) that the Federal Communications Commission’s Incentive Auction Task Force and Media Bureau have proposed.

TEP/TEPDB is a full-service, multi-discipline, turn-key engineering and construction organization. Since our 1997 inception, we have inspected, mapped, analyzed, engineered, designed, modified, upgraded and constructed more than 50,000 cell towers, broadcast towers, water towers, elevated signs, roofs and telecommunications sites throughout North America. We have more than 300 employees, of which more than 150 are Certified Climbers, located in offices in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, North Carolina, New Jersey, Texas, Washington, and Canada, and we hold Structural Engineer (S.E.) and Professional Engineer (P.E.) licenses in all 50 states, many U.S. Territories, and several Canadian Provinces. TEP Design Build offers a wide range of broadcast construction services, including tower erections, tower modifications, maintenance repair work, civil/site work, tower modification work, and line and antenna installations and modifications. Tower Engineering Professionals offers a wide range of broadcast professional services, including maintenance inspections, tower structural mappings, structural analysis, structural modification designs/drawings, rigging plans, civil/site design services, environmental analysis, geotechnical investigation, professional land surveying, and electrical/mechanical design services.

Like many other service and equipment providers, TEP is prepared to meet increased demand during the transition period and we hope to engage in coordination with other providers and vendors to work in a team-like fashion beneficial to the overall process. We see in the proposed Transition Plan a good initial framework for a smooth, orderly and timely post-auction broadcast repack. There are a handful of areas, however, that we believe could benefit for some additional analysis and action.

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For example, TEP often finds that, when called to do a project for a broadcaster, the tower has not been inspected and maintained in accordance with ANSI/TIA-222-G (TIA-G) or other applicable standards. These circumstances may create safety hazards for our crews and must be remediated prior to any work being done. Because of our experience with such delays, we urge the FCC to mandate or at a minimum, strongly encourage that all broadcasters conduct a basic tower maintenance inspection in accordance with TIA-G Annex J: Maintenance and Condition Assessment along with a tower structural analysis per the applicable jurisdictional code prior to the beginning of the Transition phases. Tower Inspections and Structural Analyses shall be conducted and overseen by a Professional Engineer licensed in the State in which the tower is located. The Commission could include in the initial confidential letters that will be sent to all repacked stations notice that the FCC expects them to have conducted initial maintenance and structural integrity checks before their construction permits are submitted. The FCC can then remind the broadcasters that this work is reimbursable from the relocation fund.

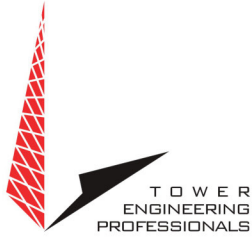
We believe the Transition Plan relies on reasonable but incomplete assumptions regarding the availability of the necessary resources. For example, it is our understanding that TEP/TEPDB was not included in several lists of tower engineering and structural analysis companies which were used as resource constraint inputs in the FCC's scheduling models. We hope that TEP/TEPDB and other vendors will become known to the FCC and to the broadcast community at large through this process to ensure a successful and timely transition. We suggest that the FCC create an online resource center where service providers and suppliers can list themselves as available to work on broadcast transitions so that licensees who find their usual provider is unable to do the job in the phase timeframe have a list of alternatives.

TEP/TEPDB also recommends that the FCC begin working immediately to create relationships with the many other government agencies and jurisdictions that will be instrumental in making the Transition Plan a success. We understand that the FCC is already working with the FAA and Bureau of Land Management, but they should also reach out to the Army Corps of Engineers, Fish & Wildlife, state and tribal historic preservation offices, and building authorities. For example, it has been our experience that a wetlands disturbance analysis by the Army Corps of Engineers can take up to *two years*, and certain state and local building authorities' requirements make it nearly impossible to gain certifications for new crews in a timely manner. If the FCC is able to reach consensus in advance regarding certification exemptions for vendors to do repack-specific work and expedited processing of approvals specific to the repack, major delays in the process can be avoided.

The Commission also should clarify its anti-collusion rules to allow broadcasters to reach out to professionals like TEP/TEPDB in advance of the start of the phasing. In our interactions with broadcasters since January, it is clear that many are so worried about violating the anti-collusion rules that they just refuse to talk to any vendor about planning for the transition. Ideally, the

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Commission could lift the restriction for stations already out of the auction, but, at a minimum, the Commission should reiterate that the prohibition on auction communications does not apply to regular business activities, such as tower maintenance. Likewise, if the FCC reminded broadcasters that this sort of preliminary tower work is a reimbursable expense, potential bottlenecks (like discovering a tower hasn't been maintained and needs repairs) can be discovered well in advance. We believe it is crucial for broadcasters to obtain structural analysis, tower mapping and other pre-transition services months in advance of the first Phase in order for this plan to be successful. Providing clarity, and perhaps even relaxation, of the prohibited communications rules in advance of the auction closing will help ensure the 39-month deadline is met.

Based on our experience in industry, TEP/TEPDB is confident that the transition can be completed on time, but we urge the FCC to consider our concerns about ensuring basic tower maintenance and structural analysis in advance of the beginning of the phased schedule. We also encourage the FCC to give broadcasters more freedom to engage with service providers and vendors like TEP/TEPDB well in advance of the close of the auction. We believe that these efforts, coupled with the overall framework described in the Transition Plan, will lead to a successful transition of the spectrum.

Respectfully submitted,

Bradley K. Little, P.E., G.C., C.W.I.

Vice-President

Tower Engineering Professionals, Inc / TEP Design Build, Inc.